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JANUARY 4,
1933.

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Captious Queries.

BY OUR QUERULOUS INQUISITOR.

Why are so few of our actors able
Correctly to spell their Christian names?
Why do our cricketing experts cable
Acid remarks on JARDINE and AMES?

Why do the girls in the picture-papers,
Snapped on the bathing-beach or pier,
Wear, as they cut their punctual capers,
Grins extending from ear to ear?

Why do the million dote on chatter,
Tosh and piffle and bilge and gup,
Turning deaf ears to things that matter,
Glueing their lips to inanity's cup?

Why is there no close season appointed
To give a rest to the supple jaw,
Sharp of tooth and double-jointed,
Of the unending BERNARD SHAW?

Why can't the masters of headline-phrasing,
Mewed in their glassy cabinets,
Coin, instead of "grim" or "amazing,"
Some more appropriate epithets?

Why aren't the horns of most motors muted?
Why is Bloomsbury famed for hash?
Why aren't gossip-mongers booted
Out of the houses whose gates they crash?

Why do self-constituted mentors
Ram their suggestions down our throats,
Crying their wares with the voice of stentors,
Ladling out praise from their butter-boats?

What of the universe—whence and whither?
What is the cause of Punch's hump?
Why does a doggerel rhymer dither?—
That's what brings me down with a bump.

Charivaria.

MANY people are still keeping up the diaries which they began on New Year's Day.

Russian workers have elected M. STALIN an honorary furnace-tender. A number of British husbands have been elected to that position without any official vote.

An Oklahoma man says that to prevent spectacles from steaming when entering a warm room a person should walk through the door backwards. Try it in a revolving door.

The Berlin policeman is provided with an indiarubber club. It comes in handy when he wants to erase his notes.

And the latest novelty in England is said to be a rubber stamp for visiting film-actresses which bears the inscription: "I think your London policemen are wonderful."

The window of a florist's shop at Luton was smashed by a runaway bull. None the less the proprietor rushed out and made a brave attempt to buttonhole the animal.

A man was recently arrested with eight bradaws in his possession. No notice was taken of his explanation that he was a worm-hole imitator in the antique furniture trade.

As evidence of the mild weather of late it is reported that blackberries have been picked near Swansea, while a couple of pockets were picked in the Strand.

Two dancers taking part in an endurance contest in Madrid have been married while they were still dancing. At Los Angeles they could easily have danced on till they were divorced.

By scoring three goals in a hockey-match during the holidays the Bishop of LONDON is considered to have performed the "mitre trick."

A DOLLAR NOTE.—If money is trouble, just think what a lot of trouble is due to America.

"Most loud-speakers are extremely sensitive," declares an expert. In that case we will refrain from saying what we really think of them.

If, as someone has said, architecture is frozen music, it seems to us that

many of our streets are lined with what must be considered frost-bitten finger exercises.

Six directors of a German insurance company have been imprisoned for fraud. They should have had the sense to take out policies against the risk.

In China when a man meets a friend he shakes hands with himself. Somehow this doesn't seem so conceited as it does to congratulate the other fellow.

A man was recently knocked down by a perambulator and injured. If no horn is provided, nursemaids should give the baby a sharp pinch at level-crossings.

SAMSON used the jawbone of an ass to end a war. In modern times this weapon is only employed to start one.

A correspondent in a contemporary reports that a bird-cage hanging near his radio-set acted as a loud-speaker. He was very much startled when he heard his canary declaiming the fat-stock prices in a cultured baritone.

A warrant-officer who has served thirty-six thousand summonses for non-payment of rates is about to retire. How his old clients will miss his cheery smile!

A Munich scientist says that the earth is flat. Business-men probably agree with him.

Poultry-farmers from Lancashire and Yorkshire are to come to London this month to discuss better and brighter housing for their birds. Up for the Coop?

We think it speaks well for the sportsmanship of the elephants who play cricket at Olympia that not one of them has complained about an opponent bowling for the body.

A gossip-writer mentions that he bumped into a well-known Peer, a Cabinet Minister and a famous actor in the Strand on Christmas Day. Happily, owing to the fog, he was able to pass unrecognised.

"What Does America Want?" asks a headline. The answer seems to be: "What we have left."

One of our leading actresses had seven lap-dogs given to her by admirers during the Christmas holidays. And we wish her a Yappy New Year.

To Phyllis on her French.

THERE are, my Phyllis, who possess
The enviable power
Their thoughts in faultless French to
express

At ninety miles an hour;

While others, though of studious trend
(And such am I), succeed
In stammering out a halting blend
OF OLLENDORF and GIDE.

But you, my Phyllis, undeterred
By foolish diffidence,
Impose on each reluctant word
What *ought* to be its sense.

Let others strive with law and rule;
You, made of sterner stuff,
Adhere to Humpty-Dumpty's school
And treat 'em good and rough.

As one arrayed in triple brass
You cope with our Hortense,
As when you tell her of "la place
Où l'omnibus commence";

Or when the treacle fails and more
You wish to order in,
You bid her bring "le sirop d'or
Comme il est, dans le tin."

And when the kitten went astray
How truly "juste" your "mot"—
"Où était-il vu dernier?
Montrez-moi l'exact spôt!"

Yet such your really Gallic air,
Your *espièglerie*,
That one would be prepared to swear
'Tis all that French should be.

Moreover—and with jealous ire
Thereat my heart expands—
My French she may no doubt admire,
But *yours* she understands.

The Robot Yawns.

"Non-violence is just a . . . a velvet
glove that hides the jaws of steel."
Indian Paper.

The Upper House Again in Hot Water.

"To keep titles bright, put a teaspoonful
of paraffin into a pailful of warm water and
wash them with it occasionally."
Glasgow Paper.

"The England eleven is as follows:
D. R. Jardine (captain),
R. E. S. Wyatt (vice-capt.),
Nawab of Pataudi,
G. O. Allen,
Sutcliffe,
Hammond,
Leyland,
Ames,
Larwood and
Voce.

—Reuters Special Service."

Morning Paper.

If JARDINE had been taking the game
seriously he would have demanded a
re-count.



WAITING FOR THE TRANSFORMATION.

THE NEGLECTED ONE (*anxiously, to Major WALTER ELLIOT*). "I SUPPOSE YOU WILL TURN OUT TO BE MY FAIRY GODMOTHER, WON'T YOU?"



"WHAT DO YOU CALL THIS PLACE?"

"YE OLDE TUDOR CHOPPE HOUSE."

"WELL, I CAN'T CUT YE OLDE TUDOR CHOPPE."

3.30 a.m. and a Way Out.

THE hours of the day and night have been computed to be twenty-four; but as a matter of fact this arithmetic is all wrong; for there are, especially if the sun is shining, in the daytime only six; while if one wakes at half-past three A.M. the night contains a thousand. And regarding these thousand hours, the problem is not merely how to get through them, but how, in that difficult process, to retain any self-respect.

Exactly why, because, as the doctors tell us, our vitality is lowest at this time, our minds should run so persistently on our defects and failures and all that is contemptible in our lives, I have no idea. Why should not low vitality equally well lead to complacency and even pride? Anyway it does not. At half-past three A.M. our inferiority is the only thing that counts. We are abject.

I refer, of course, to those of us who are in bed. It is not to be supposed that the professional night-workers are afflicted in this way: the men who drive cabbages to Covent Garden and the men who receive them, the police on their beats, the firemen on duty, the makers and distributors of newspapers, the engine-drivers and stokers, the sorters of letters, the officers and crews of ships. It is not credible that because it is half-past three A.M. these honest toilers are despising and indicting themselves. Not at all; they have something to do; their minds, lucky fellows! are occupied by affairs outside themselves. Should any of the three-thirty A.M. depression be theirs, it will come many hours later, when their sleeping is, or should be, going quietly on; but probably, just because it is not 3.30 A.M., they are immune. It is before the dawn that it is darkest; and there is no dawn in the afternoon.

After, however, suffering at the fatal hour for far too long, I have hit on a way to fight it, if not wholly to conquer it. Like all great inventions, this one is simple, so simple that I marvel not to have heard of it before. Briefly it is this: Sit down in broad day, when all is well, and write a letter to yourself, reminding yourself, as you will peculiarly be in a position to do, of the other side and recalling the decent things you have done.

"DEAR YOU," it might begin, or "DEAR ME"—but "DEAR ME" sounds silly, and this is a very serious matter. "DEAR YOU," then.

"DEAR YOU,—I have long wanted to tell you what a high opinion I have of you. I know that you are inclined to be self-depreciatory, but you are wrong. You may now and then have been foolish, you may even have been cowardly; but who has not? And that

was when you were not yourself, overdone, run down; and for every unworthy moment in your life I could remind you of a dozen that were fine.

"That time, for instance, when you were so untiring and kind in visiting old George at the nursing-home—don't forget that. You didn't want to go; you couldn't bear to see anyone suffering; you had to drag yourself there day after day; but you went, and it made all the difference to his last hours. Don't forget that.

"And again and again you have been generous to your poorer friends, even at times when things weren't going too well for yourself. Don't forget that either.

"You're not a hero, I know; but then tell me who invariably is. You're an ordinary fellow with ordinary qualities and defects; but you're a great deal better than lots of our acquaintances that I could name. You have tried to play the game more than not, and you have won a good deal of respect and even affection, and there are people who would sink with you if you let yourself slide and cultivated this idiotic mood of hopelessness and remorse.

"Remorse is sheer self-indulgence. Your duty is to look ahead and plan for fun and decency in the future.

Your true and admiring Friend,
You."

—Something like that. My belief is that if all of us who wake at half-past three A.M. and take only the gloomiest views, had under the pillow a letter like that to read, we should soon, with a smile on our faces, be asleep again. E. V. L.

To Lucasta

On Coming From a Concert.

TELL me not, Sweet, it was unkind
That when you bade me fare with
you
To hear STRAVINSKY, I should find
It somewhat hard to bear with
you.

I cannot learn to like the stuff
These modernists work off on us;
It strikes me frequently enough
As purposely cacophonous.

Their wood-wind squeals, their brass
lets go
Such blarings, hoots and caterwauls
As might have served at Jericho
To undermine and batter walls.

In fact they seem to deprecate
As painfully inopportune
So obsolete, so second-rate
A feature as a proper tune.



Housewife. "BUT I GAVE YOU A SUIT A FEW MONTHS AGO."
Overdressed Tramp. "ER—YES 'M. I GOT IT ABOUT ME SOMEWHERE."

No, child; at heart I cherish yet
Music the Masters taught to me.
Freischütz, *Peer Gynt*, the *Casse-
Noisette*,
What fantasies they brought to me!

What visions too I still can see
In HAYDN'S tripping symphonies—
Pan with a dryad on his knee,
Silenus with a nymph on his.

But noise that drives the sense awry,
Esteeming that too heavy an
Infliction, I shall live and die
Anti-Prokovievian.

You're in the movement; you keep time
With Progress to the very tick:
Bear with me if you feel that I'm
An antiquated heretic.

Welsh Humour.

"Bookmakers and their stands are only
legal on a racecourse so long as they are
movable."—*Daily Paper*.

"Ann Harding looking sweeter than ever
as a Victorian beauty in Radio Pictures 'She
Stoops to Conquer.'—*North-country Paper*.
And not in the least embarrassed at
being so dreadfully out of date.

Dancing Notes.

You don't dance? Don't know the first thing about it? Then that is just where I can be of service. That is just the one thing I can tell you.

The first thing about it is the use of the feet. The principal thing to remember is that at least one of these should always be in contact with the floor. The second thing about it is the use of your partner's feet. These should only be used where there is absolutely nowhere else to stand. Even then it is unwise to stand too long in one position, as you will find after a while that even the most sensibly-shod feet are not so comfortable as *terra firma*.

Before moving off, some thought should be given to the problem of finding out what dance is in progress. Should you be unable to distinguish between the various *tempos* you can ask a trumpeter or saxophonist what the time is. If he looks at his watch before replying you may safely assume that his answer will be the wrong one and without waiting for it consult the drummer. It will be easier for him to reply, because apart from grinning he is probably doing nothing with his mouth. Let there be no misunderstanding this time. Ask him in so many words what the dance is. If he replies, "Can't you see I'm happy now?" ignore the man and consult a programme.

Having finally decided that—shall we say?—a fox-trot is being performed retrieve your partner and take up a position with your feet pointing in the direction of the dance.

A one-way or gyrotory system is in force in most ballrooms, the dancers moving in the opposite direction to the sun. If you keep your face to the sun, therefore, or where you think the sun ought to be at that time of night, you will be bound to be facing the right way.

Now listen carefully to the music and wait till it comes round to a suitable off-beat, on which to begin to tread the measure. This may take some time, so while you are crouching, as it were, for the spring, we will consider the various dance-forms. First, then, the fox-trot:—

The music for this is written in rather common time, but rhythm helps it along. Rhythm is obtained by

striking a cymbal time after time with a blunt instrument. Years of scientific study have been spent in finding out how to do this, but once again science has triumphed and the method is known.

In performing the fox-trot each foot should be moved separately and, so far as is possible, alternately, the length of stride being artistically varied as sundry obstacles, such as pillars, waiters and other dancers loom up. Should these loom up too unexpectedly you may find yourself obliged to use

born tango-dancer, but more often than not all we achieve is a peculiar cow-like lurch. This is because we lack a certain abandon or, as the Spaniards say, "*Hasta mañana*."

Let us therefore return to the Nordic and inspect the waltz (pronounced "waltz"). You know all about this, of course—how it began life as a gay fling flung to a lilting melody; lost heart and grew into a moody measure trodden to a tedious tune, and is now recapturing a modicum of its first fine careless rapture. The music is played in three-four time, the dancer taking three graceful steps to the bar. Those who do not care for the waltz sometimes take a few equally graceful steps to the bar and remain there until it is over.

The keen student of the Terpsic—Terpsic—the keen student of dancing will want to know about the rumba. It may be recognised by a number of taps produced in rapid succession with something of the insistence of the pneumatic road-breaker. They are made by a couple of maracas in the orchestra (No, maracas are not black men; they are the dried husks of the calabash fruit). When he hears this noise the beginner should say, "Ah! this is a rumba," and go on staggering round as before.

All this time you will have been crouching in front of the band waiting for an off-beat and wondering how to persuade your partner to move when you move. In practice you will find the easiest way to do this is to propel the lady gently along by lightly kicking the toe of whichever foot you want her to move next. A clever girl will understand

these "signals," as they are called, and back away at once. Once she is properly under way you should have no difficulty in steering her, and you can while away the time by speaking heartily of the flatness of the floor, the dulness of the band and the dismal nature of the decorations. Indeed if you develop these themes in an all-absorbing manner you will find that footwork becomes of purely secondary importance.

So choose your off-beat and let the dance begin. D. R.

"SURGEONS COMPLAINING NOW ABOUT CUTS."—*Evening Paper*.
Are they urging bigger and costlier ones?



Captain. "MON, THAT'S AWFU' TOBACCO YE'RE SMOKIN'."
Chief Engineer. "AY, AH'LL BE GLAD WHEN IT'S FEENISHED."

your partner as a fender or buffer. When faced with this unpleasant duty do not hesitate; use her as effectively as possible and apologise.

Having described the fundamentals of the fox-trot, let us now touch on the tango. This is a sinuous dance of foreign extraction. It has been extracted—with the greatest possible difficulty—from unwilling Latins. Dark olive-skinned Spaniards and sunburnt olive-oiled Italians fought fiercely to keep the thing, but the dance-importers won and now the tango is ours to use as we wish, should we wish and if we can.

Actually of course we can't. We may attempt the supple cat-like tread of the



HIGH NOTES AND LOW.
DUET FOR TENOR AND BASS.



cess." I therefore ceased from applause, but inwardly pondered how gracefully the lad performed. The agility with which some sea-lions then gambolled much pleased us, and Dr. JOHNSON was especially amused by the gestures of one as it lay on the ground and clapped its fins together, though he could not allow the propriety of letting such creatures, who could feel no loyalty, play the National Anthem. He was, however, quick to notice the injustice of handing a bouquet of flowers to a lady who had done nothing but supply the beasts with fish. "Such," said he, "is the vanity of man that he reaps the reward when these humble beasts have done his work." I was about to mention that to this lady and to the trainer, HAGENBECK, was due all the cunning of the sea-lions, when I was cut short by the entry of some large and ponderous elephants. It was the pretence at a game of cricket amongst these huge animals that gave rise to an interesting conversation between Dr. JOHNSON and myself.

Boswell. See how the crowd approves of an exhibition of their famous game, even when executed by these prodigious beasts who are far from suited to it by nature.

Johnson. Sir, that reflects more credit on the skill of the elephants than on the love of that once noble sport. For whilst onlookers are reputed to sleep during a combat between those most expert at that game, they watch the poor efforts of these creatures with eagerness.

These marvellous beasts also enacted a scene at a barber's shop, and Dr. JOHNSON made me laugh heartily by saying that he preferred to see them shaving one another than he would have one shaving himself.

The RIVELS Trio, of whom one made an imitation of that famous actor, Mr. CHARLES CHAPLIN, then greatly amused the audience. This vexed Dr. JOHNSON, who was at a loss

to understand how any but the most debased could laugh at such an exhibition of idiocy. Indeed he taxed a gentleman who sat next to him on the subject.

Johnson. Sir, do you realise that the object of your merriment is but a feeble imitation of one who at best is a mere clown of much vulgarity and little wit.

Gentleman. Not 'alf.

[Laughs heartily.]

Johnson. Am I to assume from your comment, Sir, that you yourself are one of those who can enjoy such an obscene display of folly?

Gentleman (resuming his contemplation of the acrobats). Gor' blimey, look at 'im; 'is 'at's orf again!

[Explodes in mirth.]

After this somewhat unsatisfactory conversation, Dr. JOHNSON turned his attention to the Circus, and confined his remarks wholly to me. The exquisite display of the CARLTON SISTERS, who swiftly and cleverly both threw

and caught clubs of an Indian pattern, next claimed our attention. I took the opportunity, for which I had long sought, of asking Dr. JOHNSON whether he was able to use a club of this type. But he was fully engrossed with the scene and merely replied, "Well enough, Sir, to cudgel one who asks me senseless questions." Of my admiration for the VESSES, who swung and balanced with amazing trepidity at a great height, Dr. JOHNSON was contemptuous. "They are," he said, "only earning their daily bread as I am, and it is not for us to consider whether they risk their lives or no." I was then sorely tempted to ask him how he would like to exchange occupation with one of these flying marvels, but, bearing in mind his present disposition, merely admired in silence. While the cages were being set up to contain the wild beasts, Dr. JOHNSON was amused to see the folly of many who eagerly watched the erection of the iron bars, whilst acrobats were performing the boldest of feats high above our heads. These indeed, the REINER BROTHERS on one side and TORENCE and DOLORES on the other, helped to while away our time before the entry of the carnivorous quadrupeds. These were most wonderfully subdued, as was a brown bear, by their master, KADEN, but their appearance gave great anger to Dr. JOHNSON.

Boswell. But, Sir, they are but being used to serve man, and will later be killed peacefully, as you yourself said was the proper purpose of an animal.

Johnson. Sir, that is a gross travesty on my opinions of this matter. That these animals should, in such a manner—

A Gentleman (two rows behind). Shut up!

At this point we rose and left the Circus; nor was Dr. JOHNSON'S temper at all improved by the afternoon's entertainment at this point. But as we went out, upon observing the beauty and clean-

liness of the horses and other animals, he became in a better humour. Indeed as he left he remarked that he had greatly enjoyed the display and that he must more often see such things which bring delight to common people. Upon hearing him say this I thought it more prudent not to remind him of some of his former utterances.

A New One on the Engine-Room.

"Full Speed to Port with the Herring Catch."

Caption in Daily Paper.

With helm astern?

"There are some engineers who do not hesitate to associate themselves in print with the forthright denunciation that the grid is a 'white elephant' doomed to crash ere yet it is feathered for full flight."—*Technical Paper.*

There are others who nip this *canard* in the bud.



Dear old Lady (to celebrated lion-tamer). "I THINK THE WAY YOU'VE TRAINED THOSE LIONS IS SIMPLY WONDERFUL. DO TELL ME WHAT YOU'D CHARGE TO TEACH FIDO TO BEG FOR SUGAR?"



"YOU WERE TREASURER OF THIS SLATE CLUB?"

"IF YOU CAN APPLY THE WORD 'TREASURER' TO TWO-POUN'-FOURTEEN-AN'-SEVENTENCE."

More Shattered Illusions.

VI.—"THE CABINET BREAKFASTED AT DOWNING STREET."

AS ONE IMAGINES IT.

Prime Minister. My dear, in two minutes the Cabinet will arrive to discuss this Gateshead crisis. In an hour's time the future history of our country will be formed—for good or ill.

His Wife. Oh, William, I tremble for the result. Is Lord Runton coming?

Prime Minister. Of course.

His Wife (in a whisper). It is he that makes me afraid.

Prime Minister. And I am afraid for nothing—save England.

His Wife. Thank God you said that. . . .

* * *

Chancellor of the Exchequer. I particularly wanted to see you before this Gateshead decision, Campbell. I want to know what line you will take—if we fail.

President of the Board of Trade. The courageous—the only right one, I trust.

C. of the E. It will mean the parting of the ways.

P. of the B. of T. I would give my last drop of blood to avoid it, but we must stand to our guns.

C. of the E. I give the Government two months.

* * *

Prime Minister. Gentlemen, gentlemen, this is a bitter business. Let us discuss it without rancour, and remember that our country's welfare is at stake.

Lord Runton. One moment, Mr. Prime Minister—

Prime Minister. Lord Runton, I implore you not to speak just now.

Lord Runton. I will speak. You say "discuss it without rancour." What about your Halifax speech last week?

All. Shame, shame! . . .

AS IT IS.

Prime Minister. My dear, in two minutes all these fellows will be arriving. Everything's all right for them, isn't it? You know that last time we ran a bit short of toast?

His Wife. Oh, William, I meant to ask you—is Lord Runton coming?

Prime Minister. Of course.

His Wife. Oh, dear, he's such a nuisance. He can't eat anything, and all his food has to be specially prepared.

Prime Minister. Nonsense! He must eat what's put before him.

His Wife. Well, if you don't mind his having indigestion I'm sure I don't.

* * *

Chancellor of the Exchequer. I particularly wanted to see you, Campbell. I want your advice badly.

President of the Board of Trade. Not about Gateshead?

C. of the E. Oh, no; nothing as simple as that. But you know what you were telling me about pruning roses? Now, I've got a bed of Mrs. Henry Morse . . .

* * *

Prime Minister. Well, gentlemen, we must get down to this Gateshead business. I hope you've all had everything you want?

Lord Runton. One moment, Bill. Might I be allowed to make a request?

Prime Minister (impatiently). Certainly, Runton, if it's something that won't wait till after the meeting.

Lord Runton. I'm afraid it won't. The fact is, I can't eat fish or kidneys or omelette. Would you very kindly let me have just an egg beaten up in salad-oil?

Lapses of the Illustrious.

THE momentous confession of Lord RIDDELL that until recently he did not know what a delphinium was has prompted Mr. Punch to make inquiries of a number of other eminent personages with the following instructive results:—

The Right Hon. J. H. THOMAS candidly admits that it is only within the last few years that he has been able to distinguish between an aspirin, an aspirate and an aspidistra.

Mr. LANSBURY owns that while aware that the musk-rat came from Muscovy, he was ignorant until recent debates in the House that the nutria or coypu was in any way connected with the Ogpu.

Mr. ADRIAN BOULT confesses with the utmost humiliation that when he was at Westminster he laboured under the misapprehension that the Great Panjandrum was the same as the *grosse caisse*.

Viscountess SNOWDEN, on the other hand, peremptorily denies that she

ever applied the term axolotl to the Treasury.

Lord SNELL writes to say that he once was misled into supposing that the mongoose was a sub-species of the Bombay duck, but has long since abandoned that view.

Lord NOEL-BUXTON acknowledges that before he became immersed in agriculture he was under the impression that the hydraulic ram was a member of the ovine race.

Mr. EPSTEIN wishes it to be clearly understood that he never heard of DANTE's Terza Rima, and is not responsible for the prospective plagiarism committed by the Italian poet.

Lord ROTHERMERE's secretary writes to inform us that his Lordship regrets to say that until recently he was quite unaware of the meaning of the word czimbalom, and imagined that it might be a patent food. He has now been enlightened as to its true character—viz., that of an instrument of the dulcimer variety—by his son, the Hon. ESMOND HARMSWORTH, who on a recent visit to Hungary was serenaded by five hundred Magyar horsemen, each of them playing

the czimbalom with one hand and taking off his magnificently plumed hat with the other.

Lord BEAVERBROOK, in a most illuminating letter, owns that he was until recently under the impression that Mr. BALDWIN was a relative of ROBERT BALDWIN, the well-known Canadian statesman. It is with the greatest relief that, as the result of exhaustive genealogical inquiries, he has entirely cleared Canada from this grievous stigma and conclusively proved that Mr. BALDWIN is a lineal descendant of BALDWIN II., Emperor of Romania, who was noted for the discreditable and undignified methods by which he extricated himself from the desperate financial straits in which he was continually involved. See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 13th Edition, Vol. III., p. 245. C. L. G.

The Perils of Banting.

"In England marriage with a deceased wife's sister became lawful in 1907."

Recent Publication.

"LUCERNE FOR FOWLS."

Irish Paper.

And Strasbourg for geese.



"DON'T WORRY HIM, DEARIE. P'RAPS 'IS MOTHER WON'T LET 'IM PLAY WIV STRANGE CHILDREN."

Not Lawn-Tennis.

My SON,—You have arrived at the age of indiscretion. (That is to say, you have begun to peep at the newspapers, you listen, too acutely, to the conversation of your elders, and then you make sudden and unsuitable remarks when visitors are here.) Next year you are going to school and you will there play cricket. I hope that you will like cricket and be good at cricket, for it is a very good way in which to pass a warm summer afternoon; and some of the costumes are fine. But I hope that you will not read the cricket-writers this week (I write two days before the Second Test match begins), for they may give you a wrong impression.

The great point of cricket, boy, is character. All cricketers are good and manly. Whether this means that only good and manly people play cricket, or that cricket makes all those who play it good and manly, I can't say. The blunt facts are as stated above. Cricket, which is played with a hard leather ball, is superior in point of character to the effeminate game of lawn-tennis, which is played with a soft ball—and indeed to every other game, however hard the ball.

All this being so, you would expect a contest between the pick of England's cricketers and the flower of Australia's cricketers to produce a very fine exhibition of very high character, would you not? You would expect—would you not?—an atmosphere so saturated with noble character that it enveloped not only the players but those who only sat a short distance away and watched the proceedings. You would expect, I say, the kind of spiritual air which must have hung over *Lyonnesse* during the reign of KING ARTHUR.

And for all I know such an atmosphere may in fact be present. But I can discover no evidence of it in the despatches of the cricket-scribes. They alarm, they horrify me. First, my son, I note with pain that the tiresome jargon of German and Russian thinkers (*sic*) is being introduced into our beloved national game. There are no more fast bowlers. They are "shock" bowlers or "storm" bowlers. (What a slow bowler is called I know not—probably a "reactionary" bowler.) There is no bowling at the leg-stump. That has been promoted to "leg-theory." At this rate it will not be long before we speak of "cricketismus" or "leg-stump kultur."

But there is worse, far worse. Consider, boy—or rather, do not consider—the *manners* displayed at these great international contests (if the scribes aforesaid are correct). There are men, it appears, called "barrackers," men who for a small cash-payment obtain admission to the ground and thereby earn the right not only to watch but to direct the conduct of the players (the said players, again, being the pick of two hemispheres). If the game is not played in a manner which affords these gentlemen the maximum of entertainment they boo and shout derisive remarks; if they are pleased they show their satisfaction by flinging orange-peel (in a joyous manner) on to the playing-field; and sometimes, I read, an English fielder, delighted by this gesture of goodwill, picks up some of the orange-peel and throws it back.

Nor do they confine their advice and influence to the technical side of the game. If the Captain of England, a guest in the country, elects to wear the cap of a certain cricket-club to which he belongs he is booed by the wise men of the sixpenny stands and lectured in the papers by superannuated bowlers; and one of these goes so far as to say that the M.C.C. should cable to England's captain on the eve of a Test Match instructions to wear a different cap. So far, I believe, there has been no ruling on the colour of the English captain's sock-suspenders; but that may come.

I rub my eyes. Is this our knightly, chivalrous cricket? Did ARTHUR's knights, I wonder, divert their attention from the spear-work of a jousting knight in order to denounce the colour of his plumes? And, if he bored them by remaining in the saddle, did they boo? Or did they, as the bored can nearly always do, go quietly away?

But there are stranger things yet, my son. Cricket, as I have told you, is played with a hard ball; and if this ball comes into violent contact with the human body it may hurt. That is why cricket is a manly game (as opposed to lawn-tennis, in which the ball is so effeminate and soft that, even if it violently strikes you in the eye, it causes no discomfort at all). And this being so, you would expect that the greater the danger of hurt or damage from the hard ball the greater would be the thrill, both for player and spectator. But no; it seems that our base English "shock" bowlers have been bowling the hard ball so fast that even the heroic Australians have been unable either to strike the ball or get out of the

way. This, apparently, is not cricket. Both crowd and critics have condemned the practice; and the batsmen, I read, instead of baring their breasts to the ennobling blow, approach the wicket as thickly armoured as ARTHUR's knights or America's university footballers.

Well, they can have it which way they like, but not both. If a hard ball is good for us because it hurts, then the more it hurts the better; and if it isn't a good thing to be hurt, why sneer at lawn-tennis? Personally I should hate to stand up to a "shock" bowler; but then I don't go round saying that cricket is glorious because it is dangerous. It isn't—it's just a good quiet game for short periods on warm afternoons. But you get more exercise playing tennis—and if you play with me you are just as likely to be hurt.

Then there has been a great deal of chat in the Antipodean organs because in a friendly match against Tasmania the English captain went so far as to arrange his bowling order as he thought best without consulting the audience. But this time the complaint was not that he used his "shock" bowlers, but that he used his *slow* bowlers. So, what with one thing and another, it must be quite worrying to be England's captain, and I hope you'll never be drawn into that.

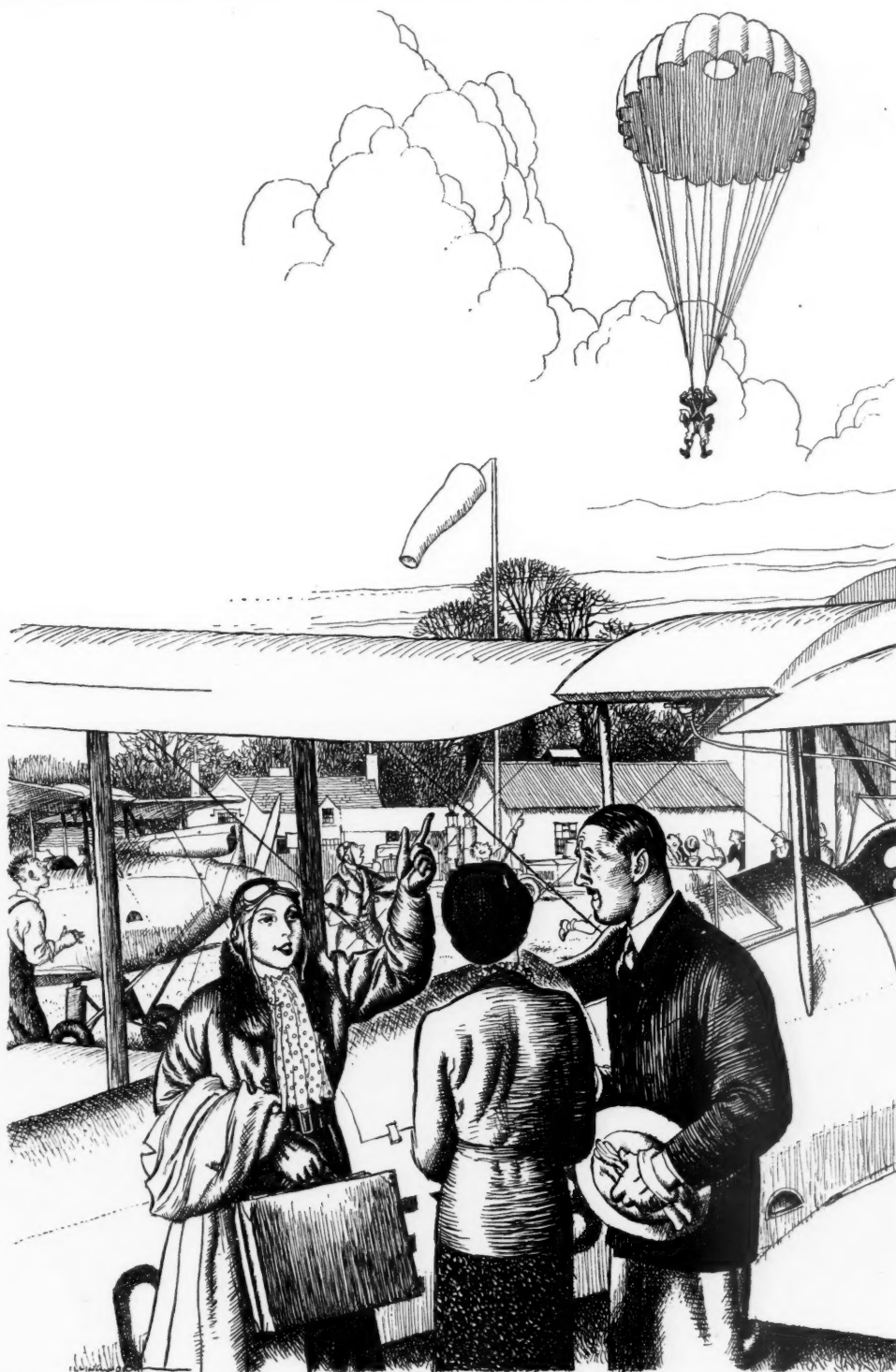
By the time this letter is released to the public the next Test Match should be nearly over, and even stranger reports of the proceedings may have reached us. I do hope that this time the English captain will not have a coloured handkerchief or an offensive belt, that all our fast bowlers will bowl slowly and carefully on the off-side, and that nobody will do anything without getting permission from the sixpenny seats. As for you, boy, I say again, I hope you will like cricket and be good at it; but do your best to keep out of this international stuff, and, if you can't avoid it, at least don't write about it. I shall be in trouble myself after this. A. P. H.

The Sad Truth about Army Dress Reform.

"Striking features are tight water proof hat of beer stalker pattern which can be folded into the pocket, open necked tunic and shirt with dull bronze buttons and badges."—*Local Paper*.

"Place a decapitated turtle's head on the stump of its neck and pop your finger into its jaws 48 hours later and you will be minus a thumb."—*Evening Paper*.

If you want to lose a finger, reverse the process.



Lady Aviator. "I'M AFRAID YOU WON'T SEE MY HUSBAND FOR A FEW MINUTES YET. HE ALWAYS PREFERS TO COME DOWN THAT WAY AS HE NEVER TRUSTS ME TO MAKE A SAFE LANDING."



Lady (describing new arrivals to neighbourhood). "A NICE FRESH-LOOKING GIRL, I THOUGHT HER—NO PAINT OR POWDER—SIMPLE——"

Daughter. "OH! COME, MOTHER—REALLY—I MEAN TO SAY—SHE'S NOT AS BAD AS ALL THAT."

"Hope Springs Eternal."

How splendid it would be
If this New Year
That starts in such a gloomy fashion here
Should in its passage see
Produced to cheer
Our patient but disgruntled folk,
Harassed by constant fear
Of still less work, still more expensive beer,
A really brand-new joke!
A joke without a pedigree,
No worm-eaten re-varnished wheeze,
Nothing to do with mothers-in-law or cheese
Or twins or Aberdeen or ugly faces—

A wholly new creation
Whose origin no crudition traces
TO ARISTOPHANES;
A joke to set the entire nation
Laughing upon its way
As if all life were one long holiday!

How glorious it would be to view
Ripples of laughter running round the earth
From China to Peru,
Till Japs and Laps and Letts and Huns and Finns
Threw up their chins
And cackled in their mirth,

And even the solemn Bolshi, for a while
Oblivious of his Five Year Plan
And mindful that he too is but a man,
Should condescend to smile! H. C. B.

[Mr. Punch undertakes to explore every possible avenue.]



Things Which Could Scarcely Have Been Better Expressed.

"I, therefore, gave fair warning," Mr. Lloyd George continued, 'whatever the threat may be from peers—from peers I have created and poors created by my successors.'—*Evening Paper*.

"The ancient Egyptians used to decorate their homes with branches of date-palm at Christmas-time, regarding it as a symbol of life triumphing over death."—*Evening Paper*.

It was very clever of them to guess the right date.

"Cover a little washed rice with cold water. . . . Stand in the pan in a second pan of boiling water for about one hour before required for serving."—*Cooking Hints in Daily Paper*.

A better plan is to persuade someone else to.



WESTERN MAGIC.

SIR SAMUEL HOARE. "YOU WILL SEE THAT THIS IS NO TRICK, BUT A TRUE HERB OF GRACE, WHICH WE HOPE AND BELIEVE WILL GROW INTO A MIGHTY TREE."

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"I WANT YOU TO TRY ON THAT GOWN, BARKER, TO SEE HOW IT LOOKS. YOUR FIGURE IS PRACTICALLY IDENTICAL WITH MINE."
 "YES, MADAM, BUT I'M AFRAID YOU'LL FIND IT A SHADE TIGHT UNDER THE ARMS."

Trouble in Africa.

SOMETHING exciting has happened. Public interest has been raised recently to a pitch unheard of among our dark neighbours for miles around by a startling event (or should I say advent?), that of a pale pink infant with blue eyes and yellow hair.

So far so good. This phenomenon among new-born creatures is mine, and I bear a position of some honour and responsibility among these people. They call themselves my children and me their great white *bwana*, their father in wisdom. Moreover—without any desire to boast on my part—I possess a gramophone and my wife has dresses of many colours, and it is well known that my cook scatters a shilling for our food-stuffs at the village market as though it were not indeed a good five days' local wages. My son and heir is therefore already a man of consequence. The problem is this: How to find a name meet for or worthy of this prodigious effort on the part of Nature.

You understand, of course, what I mean by "meet"? Here is an old fellow called, with obvious fitness, He-

Having-Six-Toes, and yonder a brown maiden known as She-Born-in-the-Time-of-Sleeping-Sickness-Injections. Others, whose fathers have acted as bearers many times for white *bwanas* bear the proud titles, in coastal Swahili, of Where-Are-the-Tent-Pegs or Open-the-Folding-Bed. High-sounding these may seem to their humbler neighbours, but travel gives that indefinable distinction to a man which is bound to be reflected in his ideas.

Not that the pagan community fails to appreciate the sounding worth and dignity of names borne from foreign worlds. My Swahili cook and *dhobi* bear the names (fully justified by their being quite two shades lighter in colour) of Ibrahim son of Yusuf and Raschid son of Ali; and these sound—to translate the matter-of-fact approval of the native mind into a delicate Cockney figure—a bit of all right, ignorant though the owners may be of the PROPHET's works or of Arabian Nights' romance. Due honour too is given to the converts of the Holy Fathers' mission nearby. Yonder toothless old hag with a squint that lends her such sly unconscious villainy is marvellously become Virginie, and her stolid brown baby

granddaughters playing in the banana-grove respond to Philomena and Anastasia respectively. And who can wonder that the benign ecclesiastical beauty of "Simone Petro" and "Emmanuelo" strike a childlike respect and wonder in the primitive heart?

Well, you see my difficulty. Can you imagine the PRINCE OF WALES christened a plain and simple Geo. while the Smiths and Browns of City Road or "Seaview" boast of Albert Haig Fitzmaurices? Would the nation lie down under it? I doubt it.

I am the sole representative here of glorious European civilisation, if I may except the Presbyterian Nyasaland dispensers, who humbly but effectively bear silent witness to that civilisation under the names of Isaiah MacIntyre Chigamila and Homer Titus Higginson Milaga. How shall I publicly own that the name long ago fore-ordained for my heir by all the laws of heredity and family custom is but a paltry four letters, a bald brevity ill becoming him who is surely to be one day the greatest of great white *bwanas*? Plain John he was to be, but almost my courage and my purpose fail me. Will he ever, can he ever, live it down?

The Classical Tradition.

Charbury School was founded by Sir Pelleas Geraint in the sixth century A.D. It claims to be among the older of our English public schools and is famed far and wide for its classical tradition.

Many a time through the centuries have its venerable piles vibrated to shouts of school triumphs, but never perhaps have they been so shaken as they were when Raymond Shiner, the head-boy, recently cleared the lath in the high jump at nine-feet-two. It was a school record.

But the enthusiasm was short-lived. The same evening springs were discovered attached to the shoes that he had worn, and the following day, on a platform before the assembled school, he stood with Dr. Remus, the head-master, who had determined to make an example of him. Between the two was a table, and on the table was a cane.

"Boy," said Dr. Remus darkly, "you have sinned against the British code of honour and sportsmanship. Before I administer chastisement have you anything to say in extenuation of your conduct?"

"I have, Sir," replied Raymond fearlessly. "I am, as you know, the head-boy of a school which, even among our great English public schools, is second to none in its upholding of the classical tradition."

At this there was a subdued murmur of applause among the boys (for Carburians, Old and New, are nothing if not loyal), and even the eye of Dr. Remus, who is reputed never to have made a false quantity in his life, wore a momentary gleam.

"It was here," continued Shiner, "that my eyes were opened to some of the richest treasures that life has to offer: to the vivid descriptive powers of LIVY, the melting pathos of OVID, the wit of HORACE and inimitable epics that great HOMER has bequeathed to posterity."

As these names rolled in succession from his lips there was again a ripple of applause, for no true Carburian can recall them unmoved.

"Kindly address yourself to the issue, Sir," said Dr. Remus, fearing that he was losing his grip on the situation.

"Within these walls," cried Shiner, "I was nurtured on the tales of Greek and Trojan heroism. Tell me this: Did the warrior who went out to single combat knowing that he was invulnerable save for a negligible portion of his anatomy respect these new-fangled notions of honour and sportsmanship? And is Achilles accounted a coward?"

A look of horror at the suggestion spread over the face of Dr. Remus, and cries of "No!" rang through the hall.

"And what of that 'wielder of stately measures,' VIRGIL?" said the boy. "Were his heroes milksops? Would Carburians hear without protest the censure of Æneas because in times of stress he accepted from Mother Venus assistance in the shape of invisibility and god-hewn armour? I think not. Then who am I that I should spurn what, on the eve of the school sports, I could only interpret as an opportune gift from the gods, namely, a pair of powerful

springs that had already outstayed their purpose, protruding from the settee in the prefects' common-room?"

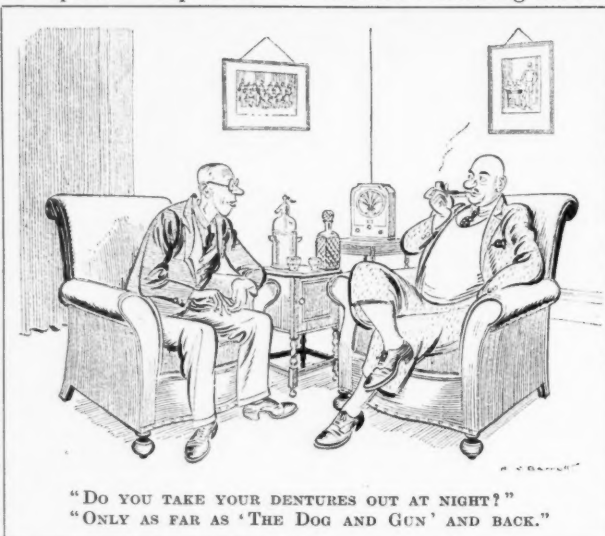
Cries of "Let him off!" came from one or two of the bolder spirits among the boys; and Dr. Remus' hand was seen to be shaking.

"You have indicted me, Sir," said Shiner, "for infringing the British code of honour and sportsmanship. But compared with our classical tradition this code was born but yesterday. And as for national standards, let me, in conclusion, remind you that our memorable founder, Sir Pelleas Geraint, was himself a contemporary of Britain's greatest hero, King Arthur, who 'wore the white flower of a blameless life,' but who, in single combat again, did not scruple to use a sword 'with blade so bright that men were blinded by it.' He knew that his Excalibur was infallible, and yet he fought. I have finished. Deal with me as you think fit."

But Dr. Remus was unmanned; for the antiquity of Charbury was as near to his heart as its classical tradition. With tears streaming from his eyes he rose and shook the

boy warmly by the hand. And he was only just in time, for the next moment Raymond Shiner was seized by his colleagues and carried shoulder-high in triumph from the hall.

Meanwhile, I understand that all school athletic fixtures have been cancelled for an indefinite time ahead. Not by Charbury—by its opponents. C. B.



"DO YOU TAKE YOUR DENTURES OUT AT NIGHT?"
"ONLY AS FAR AS 'THE DOG AND GUN' AND BACK."

"Ladies wanted, to introduce the exclusive, unique '—' handbags to fiends. Very remunerative terms."

Advt. in *Daily Paper*.

We had supposed that a fiend would often take a handbag from an absolute stranger without a blush.

Translations from the Chinese.

I.—THE STATESMAN.

THIS war was undoubtedly necessary; The people were getting restive and were asking for more rice,

They were even looking with deplorably scant respect At the Sacred Emperor's picture.

All that has been altered;

One in ten of the labourers is dead

And the others have less rice to eat.

The Emperor has been pleased to make me a Marquis.

II.—THE POET TO THE TAX-COLLECTOR.

If I knew that the money I so reluctantly give you Would create spinning-mills and grow more rice and corn To fill hungry mouths

I might almost be happy;

But I have observed that my pitiful tael

Become gold bricks in the coffers of Yan Kce and Fran Ko And that many honourable folk in those lands are idle and hungry.

It is not good enough;

I cannot congratulate your father.

W. K. S.



"I'M SORRY TO SAY THAT IS THE LAST LENGTH, LADIES. AND WHOEVER GETS IT SHOULD BE AMPLY CONVINCED OF THE WONDERFUL STRENGTH OF AN EXCELLENT MATERIAL."

This Cruising.

"WHERE is my cabin, please?" I asked.

"I will show you your *room*, Sir," replied the steward.

Liners are becoming more like hotels and less like ships every day. There is about them an almost oppressive atmosphere of luxury—ballrooms, palm-courts, pages, passenger-lifts. One looks instinctively for the billiards-room and the garage.

And now, you notice, cabins are "rooms." The salty sturdy phrases of the sailor are being ousted by the anæmic nomenclature of the landsman. Stewards are "waiters," and starboard and port will soon be "left" and "right." The skipper and the chief officer are in imminent danger of becoming the "manager" and the "assistant manager." And then a shipwreck will be described in stirring words like these:—

"The manager stood upon the roof of the sinking ship. His orders came sharply above the crash of the breaking seas.

'Are all the customers on the top-floor?' he bellowed.

'Yes, Sir,' shouted the assistant manager.

'Are you sure there are no more downstairs?'

'No, Sir; they are all here, including the second-class customers from the rooms in the blunt end and the emigrants from the sharp end.'

'Then get the boats away—women and children first.'

'Ay, ay—I mean, certainly, Sir.'

I began to fear that contact with this polished shore-going phraseology might have enfeebled the vernacular of the lower ranks. Then, looking down the baggage-hatch, I saw a carelessly-aimed trunk miss an able seaman by an inch. I awaited his comment anxiously. Would he say, "I really *must* ask you to be more careful how you handle these articles, my old colleague"? He did not. He administered reproof in simple sailorly words. I was relieved.

* * * * *

There appears to be an impression in some quarters that once a ship has put to sea nothing much remains for the crew and the passengers to do; that, leaving one man to steer, the crew blissfully surrender themselves to card-games on the foc'sle head, while the

passengers settle down into deck-chairs, there to remain in a state of suspended animation until port is reached.

This is not so. A feverish activity breaks out all over the vessel almost before the fluttering handkerchiefs on the quay have merged into the grey background of the Customs shed. Officers, engineers, stewards, seamen, musicians, cooks, greasers, and many other unidentifiable people in peaked caps or black bow-ties or striped aprons or overalls, revolve in their several orbits, disappearing and reappearing through doorways, along corridors, up and down steel ladders.

Compared with a ship at sea an overturned anthill is just an inert mass.

As to the passengers, they may hire deck-chairs and borrow books from the ship's library in the innocent hope that they are going to dream away the jolly old hours in the abandon of utter idleness. They little suspect how soon they are to be drawn into the giddy vortex.

You see, every steamship company is animated by a benevolent desire to relieve the boredom of the passengers, to help them fill out their day, to make the ship *One Big Happy Family*.

To this end the whole day is mapped out, from bath to bedtime. When there



THE FRANTIC FIFTIES.

"No, my child, you may *not* go to the magic lantern entertainment. You have had a delightful peep through the telescope and any further excitement might be harmful to your delicate constitution."

are no deck-games there are treasure-hunts; when treasure-hunts languish there is dancing; when there is no dancing there are concerts or sweepstakes or fire-drills; and when there is none of these there are meals.

* * * * *

Meals deserve a fresh paragraph—several paragraphs.

Somewhere, at some time, a passenger under the care of the British Mercantile Marine went hungry. Since then it has been the steady aim of steamship lines to press food upon every passenger who, bearing in mind the state of the weather at the time, is suspected of being capable of retaining nourishment.

This praiseworthy practice of filling the passenger to repletion is, I think, one of the most interesting features of shipboard life to-day. It is done in a very ingenious manner.

There are, of course, the usual set meals, all splendidly announced by bugle calls: breakfast (a simple six-course repast) at 8.30 A.M.; a rather more substantial seven-course luncheon

at 1 P.M., and a fairly comprehensive dinner (running to nine courses) at 7.30 P.M. Now that is practically within the compass of any person who enjoys robust health and is agile enough to dodge tennis-nets, jump over quoits and promenade two hundred times round the deck between each meal.

Does this creditable gastronomical performance satisfy the steamship company? No. They are tortured by the thought that, despite these snacks, the passenger may be exposed to the gnawing pangs of hunger. Their servants are accordingly instructed to tempt him to defy medical advice by Eating Between Meals. They do this in devious and nefarious ways.

At the beginning of the voyage your cabin-steward will say winningly: "Now, what would you like first thing, Sir, before your bath? Tea and biscuits and a little fruit?"

"No, thanks; just a cup of tea," you reply.

Promptly at 7 A.M. (or at whatever other unholy hour you have elected to start the day) your faithful steward

staggers in bearing a tray laden with a large pot of tea, a pound of biscuits, two apples and a grape-fruit.

You drink the tea and leave the rest. But the rations arrive as usual the next morning, and the next, until at last your resistance is broken down. Perhaps out of consideration for the feelings of your tempter you weakly nibble an apple or interfere with a grape-fruit. You are lost. You have been trapped into taking a meal before breakfast every day.

And you perceive in the steward's eye a gleam of gratitude, of satisfaction, of consciousness of duty done. He hums softly as he goes away, and I have no doubt he tells Bill, your bath-steward, that No. 29 has toed the line at last.

The next alimentary interval is the yawning gap between breakfast and luncheon—an æon-like period of four-and-a-half hours. At eleven o'clock a deck-steward seeks you out, no matter where you may be hiding, and coaxes you to partake of a cup of beef-tea and a few slabs of toast.

Or, if you happen to be in the smoke-room, trays of olives, potato-flakes and other thirst-inspiring dainties appear mysteriously at your elbow and refuse to go away until you have sampled them.

The chasm between luncheon and dinner is bridged in the orthodox manner by afternoon tea. And after dinner sandwiches pervade every part of the ship. They are magically replenished as they are eaten, and they remain, a source of temptation to the passenger, until midnight. After that hour he must tighten his belt and keep starvation at bay as best he can until the early-morning tray arrives.

A man told me that on the Iron Funnel Line they have night-stewards who go round at 4 A.M., wake the passengers and press sandwiches upon them. I hesitate to believe this. He also mentioned (this, I think, is authentic) the case of s.s. *Dyspeptic*. She went aground on a sand-bank outside New York Harbour in 1929. They refloated her by throwing all the caviar overboard.

* * * * *

I hope I have now removed any impression that there is nothing for passengers to do. Their days are positively crowded. They are on the go from morning till night. If the Captain thinks they are slowing down a little he has a nasty little notice posted outside the purser's office: "CLOCKS WILL BE ADVANCED TO-NIGHT TWENTY MINUTES."

That means you get twenty minutes less in bed, or, anyway, you are robbed of twenty minutes. You have got to work faster. You have less time in which to eat the meals and play the games and attend the concerts and admire the sunsets and finance the sweepstakes.

One charming lady I met in the Bay of Biscay (I mean, of course, we first spoke then: she had been in the ship all the time) told me that for years she had been simply dying to read *Les Misérables* right through. She said she had never been able to find time ashore, so she brought the book with her on cruises.

She had got through a quarter of it by taking the world-cruise, and was now hoping to do a chapter between Southampton and Lisbon. But, bless you, whenever the officer on the bridge saw her settling down to read he blew four short blasts on the syren and we all had to troop along for lifeboat drill.

A thing I like about ocean travel is the way in which one is relieved of the necessity of thinking for oneself. Every little detail is carefully arranged. Each day the notice-board outside the lounge tells us exactly where we are



THAT CHRISTMAS CRUISE.

Arab Vendor (thinking he has the right idea). "LADY, LOOK! I GIVE YOU MANY KEES FOR THE GRAND NEW YEAR WITH THE MIZZLETOES. YES?"

to-day and what we shall be doing to-morrow. For instance:—

"THURSDAY, 15TH DECEMBER, 1932.

The ship's position at noon to-day was 35°14'N. 12°33'W.

Air temperature, 71° F. Sea temperature, 62° F.

Early-closing day at Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

The ship is due to arrive at Las Palmas, Grand Canary, at 9 A.M. to-morrow. Passengers will be taken ashore in the ship's launches.

Spanish currency is used (£ equals 39.80 pesetas), but English money is as a rule accepted."

* * * * *

"English money is as a rule accepted." O glorious phrase! O glittering example of the Statement Cautious! As one might say: "If dropped into water, iron will generally sink," or "Night usually follows day," or "The weather is likely to be wet at the weekend."

Which brings us easily and naturally to Bartering with the Natives and the Language Problem.

The Britisher visiting foreign parts is astonished and not a little pained to find many people who cannot understand his native tongue, people who have never troubled to learn even a little English. Sheer laziness, of course,

but there it is. It means that, once off the beaten track, one must communicate with these ignorant persons either through an interpreter or by means of pantomime.

Personally I am all for pantomime. I am prepared to admit that it is at first embarrassing to cluck loudly in a crowded restaurant when one wants eggs, and that it is perhaps a little difficult so to arrange one's intonation as to convey to the waiter that the eggs must be lightly boiled. But with perseverance it can be done.

* * * * *
Calculations in foreign currency too are rather exhausting. It is a good plan to let the shopkeeper look over all your money and select what he wants for the article purchased. I have always found this to work well. I mean, I have never known him take more than he wanted.

Mention of currency reminds me of a phenomenon which has been engaging the attention of metallurgists for many years past. I refer to the shortage of silver which inevitably occurs during the last few days of the voyage.

A ship may sail with five hundred pounds' worth of silver aboard, but she invariably reaches port with treasury-notes and bank-notes only. Small change simply vanishes. Neither the passengers nor the purser have any silver, and it is so long ago since the barber saw half-a-crown that he forgets whether it is a round coin or an octagonal token with a hole through it.

I must leave it to others to elucidate this mystery. I have done my best. Just before we docked at Southampton I questioned the bath-steward on the subject as I handed him a pound-note (having previously appraised the value of his services at fifteen shillings). He was unable to throw any light on the matter.

"Seems funny, don't it, Sir?" he murmured.

But I felt sure the library-steward could help. I counted upon him, surrounded as he is by so many opportunities of acquiring knowledge. To my disappointment he was equally puzzled. (Not having the appropriate five shillings in silver I gave him a ten-shilling note.)

"No, there doesn't seem to be any change about at all, does there?" he said—a trifle too cheerfully, I thought.

I suppose we must leave it at that.

At the Pantomime.

"DICK WHITTINGTON" (HIPPODROME).

THIS is the best pantomime I have seen for many a long year. It is free from the drearier vulgarities and from those patches of boredom which one



THE SEA-COOK.

Idle Jack MR. LESLIE HENSON.
Cook MR. TOM D. NEWELL.

has grown accustomed to look upon as an inevitable part of the festive season's ordeal. Nor has intelligent entertainment for the fogey been achieved at the expense of the youngsters—a really remarkable feat of effective compromise.

MR. JULIAN WYLIE has embroidered



LORD MAYOR AND LORD MIAOW.
Dick Whittington . . . MISS FAY COMPTON.
The Cat MR. JOHNNY FULLER.

the affair with seductive magnificence, yet his triumph is no mere affair of reckless expenditure. It was a stroke of genius in selection and of astute diplomacy to secure Miss FAY COMPTON for the hero's part and give us an ideal principal boy in the authentic tradition.

MISS COMPTON threw herself into the business as if to the queer manner born, only occasionally betraying a slight embarrassment at the odd irrelevant things which pantomime heroes are expected to do and suffer. Her voice is sweet and clear, if not always strong enough to prevail against the enthusiasm of the orchestra; she spoke her couplets with respect for the authentic rhythm (in this differing from some of her colleagues, who "rationalised" them overmuch); set off, if I may say so with respectful admiration, the traditional nether garments of her office, walked with a gay and graceful swagger, danced prettily, fought her bout against *King Rat* with proper lack of conviction—and won all hearts, young and old.

And worthy of such a hero was his incomparable, impeccable Cat. Hindquarters a little too high for the show-ring, no doubt, but none other blemish could we detect. What grace of movement, what eloquent mewings, what adroitness in theft, what courage in attack, what ingratiating circlings and pawings, what kittenish gambols, swift pouncings, angry spitings and disdainful sulks! Could it be that some mere man, one JOHNNY FULLER, lurked inside that convincing pelt, behind that surprisingly intelligent and handsome mask, worked that busy expressive tail? Upon my word, we began to doubt it.

The third wonder of this blue-ribbon affair was the discretion of the principal comedian and his formidable, forbidding Dame—MR. LESLIE HENSON and MR. TOM D. NEWELL. They are billed as "the Idle Apprentice" and "the Cook" of the heroine's father, *Alderman Fitzwarren*, and actually make a beginning in those capacities at Fitzwarren's Stores in old Cheapside, misusing eggs, bacon, cash-registers and customers in sufficiently obvious yet happily not too long protracted ways. Thenceforward they are anything which it occurs to them to be. We are diverted by the sight of MR. HENSON being washed, dried and powdered by MR. NEWELL on board the good ship, *Saucy Kate* (whereon in this, in the scholar's

sense, corrupt version of the ancient legend the authors place them on their way to Morocco), and the diversion is tactfully broken off before it offends or grows tedious. We enjoy our Mr. HENSON inducing his shamefaced audience to sing the chorus of "Where's Bill Bailey?" by turning out the lights and, when he has thus got them going, directing them with the brilliantly obvious device of the traffic-control "Stop-Ready-Go" apparatus. We laugh at Mr. NEWELL dancing with passionate abandon as a Bacchante; or at the twain marooned with a "Stop-me-and-buy-one" tricycle in the desert, capturing a gorilla who has unaccountably strayed there. Or again there is Mr. HENSON as a voluble pedlar of patent medicines and Mr. NEWELL as a soured feminist-teetotal lecturer—the matter of all these intrusions being less important than the manner. All this the young seemed to enjoy as heartily as we did, though possibly for different reasons, and always a little less noisily, the cup of enjoyment being rather too full for loud laughter.

One gorgeous extravagance Mr. WYLIE allowed himself—a drop-curtain, in the three embrasures of which were poised and posed nine beauteous (and, I thought, slightly apprehensive) damsels, as who should say, "I too can make an expensive gesture as well as any STOLL or COCHRAN."

An altogether pleasant affair. A heavy responsibility is thrown on all fathers and uncles. They will be unusually well rewarded for shouldering it.

At the Play.

"ALICE IN WONDERLAND" (LITTLE).

I THINK all children are bound to like this show, but to adults who have their LEWIS CARROLL at heart I recommend it only with reservations.

It is probably as good a representation as there has been, but the fact remains that *Alice* was never intended to be transferred from the page to the stage. More than most fantasies it depends for its effect on the reader's private imagination, and where this is handicapped by a visible Wonderland the illusion is partly broken. For LEWIS CARROLL's peculiar skill, which lay in making nonsense not only glorious but

plausible, was essentially a literary and not a dramatic quality; and while (in the book) his powers of mesmerism are carrying us lightly over abysses of absurdity, they are also blinding us to the fact that he relied too much on puns which appear rather shameless when spoken.

I don't want to be captious, but these are real obstacles to a stage *Alice*; and it says much for Miss NANCY PRICE's production that they are to some extent overcome. She has wisely avoided the irritating mechanical stunts which might so easily have been dragged in, and has put her faith in simple settings and a laudable respect for the original text.

In Part I. we see *Alice* off down the rabbit-hole, and then travel so

be satisfied with the iron attitude of the *Duchess* towards her child, which sneezes passionately each time the *Cook* follows through with the pepper-pot, and receives sound and accurate punishment. When *Alice* picks him up (to allow the *Duchess* respite for her Court toilet, you remember) he changes suddenly into a real piglet with a fine Green-room voice and a companionable reluctance to leave us.

More than any other scene the Tea-Party gets nearest to the flavour of the book. Mr. GEORGE HAYES invests the *Mad Hatter* with much of his TENNIEL personality, and simulates a noble and reasonable madness with such charm that it seems a pity that his conversation with the *March Hare* and the *Dormouse*, and of course *Alice*, should ever stop.

In Part II. I was best pleased by the *Mock Turtle* and the *Gryphon*. Their voices come sonorously from headpieces which bear exactly the right expressions, the *Turtle's* being infinitely sad. Without presumption, has a Lord Mayor yet had the enterprise to open a Mansion House banquet by singing the incomparable "Beautiful Soup" song through a turtular mask? If not, I suggest that this might well be arranged without delay.

The Royal game of croquet ended happily by *Alice's* flamingo-mallet nonchalantly shedding a leg, an accident so pleasing to all us children that

it should obviously be made a regular feature.

My only quarrel with the Trial scene is the absence of our old friend *Bill* the Lizard from the jury-box. But I suppose his adventures in the *White Rabbit's* chimney may have been too much for him; and in any case the *Knave of Hearts* looks unmistakably vulnerable from the start.

Miss BERYL LAVERICK gets wonderfully close to TENNIEL, and, though her *Alice* is a shade less dreamy than my own conception of her, she conveys all the charm of the nicest little girl in the world's literature. ERIC.

"A snail," states a weekly journal, "has 135 rows of 105 teeth, making 14,075 teeth in all." This raises the awkward question: Do snail-lovers make good arithmeticians?



ALICE IN THEATRE-LAND—THROUGH THE OPERA-GLASS.

Alice	MISS BERYL LAVERICK.
A <i>March Hare</i>	MR. FRANK BIRCH.
A <i>Dormouse</i>	MISS RENÉE GILL.
A <i>Mad Hatter</i>	MR. GEORGE HAYES.

quickly to Wonderland that we are there to welcome her when she bumps out by the *White Rabbit's* house. Her changes of stature are managed off the stage, whence we hear her comments. And indeed one glimpse of the big *Alice* is quite enough, a terrifying hand poked out of the *White Rabbit's* bedroom window, knocking him into his own cucumber-frame to a rousing accompaniment of broken glass. Her interview with the pigeon in the upper air had naturally to be omitted.

The *Caterpillar's* precarious climb on to the mushroom is a triumph of disjointed balance, and I liked the slow-motion formality of the meeting between the *Fish* and *Frog* footmen. The *Fish* makes a glugging noise of such eloquence that even as an ineffectual angler I heard it with a twinge of remorse.

I think LEWIS CARROLL himself would

A Publishing Scandal Exposed.

OF course I took it absolutely for granted that Flint and Sharker would accept my novel, *Green Marrows*, for publication.

For one thing, they had kept it for four months, which I was told was a good sign. It showed they were interested. If they hadn't intended to consider it seriously they would only have kept it about three. And anyway it was unthinkable that a book as full of first-rate material as *Green Marrows* should be turned down by any publisher who knew his job. Why, the thing breathed and palpitated Life; it would take the public by storm; it would hold old men from play and critics from their clichés. It would make *Hatter's Castle* seem like a serial in the *Parish Magazine*. What psychology! What sweep! What understanding of the mighty and irresistible forces that sway the human heart! What. . . .

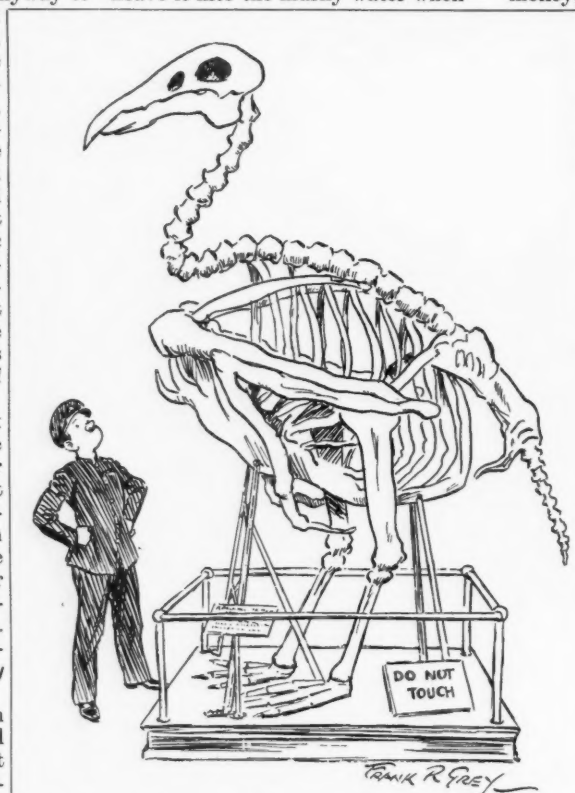
So it was a distinct shock when *Green Marrows* came back from Flint and Sharker accompanied by the merest rejection slip, to the disgusting printed rebuff on which was insultingly added, in the revolting hand of Flint or Sharker: "*Situations hackneyed. Sags in the middle. Lacks climax. Characterisation weak. Hero a nitwit. Try again.*"

Fortunately I wasn't taken in for a moment. I had heard all about the dirty work that went on in the publishing profession. If Flint and Sharker thought they could hoodwink me they were mistaken. Look at the piffling books that *did* get published! There was something shady behind it all. I was determined to get to the bottom of the matter.

Chance played into my hands that very night.

I was walking homewards along a quiet back-street in the neighbourhood of Chelsea, after having been to the cinema with a friend, when I was struck by the suspicious behaviour of two men about a hundred yards ahead. They appeared to be carrying some heavy object between them. Every now and then one of them would look nervously around, as though afraid of being watched. Somehow I knew, with a flash of intuition, that the two men were

Flint and Sharker. Keeping well within the shadow of the wall, I followed them. After taking several sharp turns through a maze of dark passages and small evil-looking streets they arrived at a lonely spot on the Embankment. I saw them put down the Thing they were carrying. They whispered furtively to one another. Presently, after looking to right and left to make sure they were unobserved, they took each an end of the gruesome bundle and were about to heave it into the murky water when—



Museum Attendant (ruminating, after Christmas holidays).
"THEM PRE-ISTORIC CHAPS MUST 'AVE GOT SICK OF COLD TURKEY AND TURKEY-ASH."

"STOP!" I thundered, just behind them.

They dropped the corpse in terror and turned their livid faces towards me. Beads of perspiration dripped from their foreheads. Their teeth chattered.

"You," I said to the one whose face reminded me of bad meat, "are Flint. And you," I said to the one with the simian features of the congenital criminal, "are Sharker."

"You—knew?" they gibbered.

"Certainly. I have been expecting something like this to happen. That was why I brought my police-whistle with me."

I produced it from my bag and was

about to blow it when Flint, with a cry for mercy, threw himself at my feet.

"No, no, not that!" he mouthed. "Tell us what you want. Would a thousand pounds buy your silence?"

"Accounts payable half-yearly," barked the terrified Sharker.

"Thirteen treasury-notes to count as twelve," squealed the wretched Flint in an agony of suspense.

I laughed cruelly. "Bestial man-eaters," I replied, "I do not want your money, fouled by the life-blood of the innocent authors upon whom you batten. My price is of a different kind. You will publish my book, *Green Marrows*, rejected by you on your particularly odious stationery a few days ago."

An electric-shock seemed to go through them. They looked at one another with glazed eyes.

"*'Green Marrows'?*" repeated Flint in a dead voice. "I seem to have heard—wasn't that the one we gave Perkins, the office-boy—?"

"Yes, yes," gurgled his confederate; "you remember, he didn't care for it."

"It would ruin us," wailed the writhing Flint. "Look here—we'll make it two thousand—"

"You will publish *Green Marrows*," I said in a voice of steel.

"We deeply regret," lied the half-fainting Sharker from force of habit, "that, owing to the present depressed state of the book-market and the consequent slump in publishing—"

"For the last time, YOU WILL PUBLISH *GREEN MARROWS*!" I hurled at them. "Or must I blow my police-whistle?"

"No, no!" they screamed.

"We give in. . . ."

Well, anyhow, that's the only way I can imagine some of the books you read nowadays get published. K.O.B.

Humour from H.Q.

"1. It has been brought to notice that cases have occurred where beds have been re-made every 12 months whether such re-making was necessary or not."

Infantry Orders.

It is not true that Mr. GANDHI has cabled to LARWOOD, VOCE and BOWES imploring them to continue their fasts.



"Now, Sonny, I wouldn't cry that way."

"CRY AS YOU BLOOMING WELL PLEASE—THIS IS MY WAY!"

A New-Year Remedy.

In ancient times mistletoe was regarded as an infallible cure for tooth-ache.

COME under the mistletoe, Jane;
I've tried it an hour and more
On an aching tooth,
And to tell the truth

It's much as it was before;
But mistletoe's not for one
Though ready to act for two,
So, if you'll make a pair
And stand just there,

We'll try the effect with you.

Then kiss me, Jane,
And kiss me again;

It's possible that will relieve the pain.

I'm feeling the benefit, Jane,
The treatment's the best I've
met.

But to make things sure

And complete the cure

You mustn't go off just yet.

As soon as you turn to run

The agony starts anew

With a stab-like throb,
And a half-done job
Is not for a girl like you.

So kiss me, Jane;
I needn't explain,
It's merely a method of easing pain.
DUM-DUM.

Mr. Punch on Tour.

THE Collection of original Drawings by JOHN LEECH, CHARLES KEENE, SIR JOHN TENNIEL and GEORGE DU MAURIER, and of reproductions of Famous Cartoons, Forecasts and other exhibits from *Punch*, is on view at Southsea until January 21; and will be at Eastbourne, from February 5 to April 2; at Hereford, April 19 to May 24; and at Liverpool, May 28 to June 11.

A separate Exhibition of prints depicting humorous situations between Doctor and Patient will be on show at the Central Museum, Northampton, from January 7 to February 4; at Birkenhead, from February 18 to March 18; at York, April 1 to 29; at Gateshead, May 13 to June 10; at Burton-on-

Trent, June 24 to July 22; and at Bolton, August 5 to September 2.

Invitations to visit either of these Exhibitions at any of the above places will be gladly sent to readers if they will apply to the Secretary, "*Punch*" Office, 10, Bouverie Street, E.C.4.

Embarras de Richesse.

Do people think a fellow lacks
Such quantities of almanacks?
The postman dumps them here in sacks;
I nail them to the wall with tacks,
Write memoranda on their backs,
And stuff them into holes and cracks.
Will the invasion ne'er relax?
The Government should surely tax
This spoiling of our Christmas *vacs.*;
Meanwhile—touch wood! *Vobiscum Pax!*
But send me no more almanacks.

Scandal in Oxford.

"Miss Barbara Flower has won a Craven Scholarship at Oxford University, and is the first woman in history to do so. . . .
Miss Flower was up at Pembroke."
Croydon Paper.



Virile Person. "BY JOVE! JUST AS WELL I DIDN'T WEAR MY SHORTS."

Our Booking-Office.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

A Companion of Genius.

MOST of us can recollect Mrs. CARLYLE's faithful female friend, GERALDINE JEWSBURY, but GERALDINE's elder sister, *Maria Jane Jewsbury* (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 6/6), has faded from a brighter actuality into a more shadowy remoteness. A cotton-spinner's daughter, reared with "that abundance of corporeal comforts to which the profits of manufacturing prosperity are commonly applied," MARIA JANE thirsted for the attributes and companionship of genius. A turn for essay-writing, fiction and verse secured her the first, an adroit dedication to WORDSWORTH the second; and she enjoyed both until, marrying a peripatetic parson, she died, aged thirty-three, of cholera at Poona. The delightful memoir with which Mr. ERIC GILLET introduces a selection from her essays is full of indispensable sidelights on the WORDSWORTH circle; and the essays themselves, notably "An Old Bachelor's Trip to Paris" and "The Comfortable Woman," have more than a touch of the wit and tenderness of *Cranford*.

Columbus Redivivus.

There is a sort of poetic fitness in the fact that certain of the fellow-citizens of COLUMBUS should have discovered the only virgin continent still waiting to be explored—namely, that known to the ancient Irish as the Land under Wave. The earlier attempts of the Genoese Salvage company, known as the "Sorima," to locate the wreck of the P. and O. liner *Egypt* and recover the bullion from her strong-room were described by Mr. DAVID SCOTT in a

previous volume, *Seventy Fathoms Deep*. That volume closed on a note of tragedy, with the destruction by an explosion of the original salvage ship *Artiglio* and the loss of most of her crew, including three of the company's most intrepid and experienced divers. In his present book, *The "Egypt's" Gold* (FABER AND FABER, 12/6), Mr. SCOTT takes up the tale at the point where the second *Artiglio* and the successors of the lost divers resumed the task where their predecessors left it. Mr. SCOTT lived on board the whole time with but short absences, and shared the thrills, the disappointments and the hope deferred of the ship's company right up to the triumphant culmination of the enterprise; and he writes with the warmest appreciation of the courage, cheerfulness and dogged determination of all concerned. The tale as he tells it is as exciting as any romance of treasure-hunting; though the difficulty experienced in the case of so recent a wreck as that of the *Egypt* rather seems to put a damper on any ideas of recovering the lost plate-fleets of Spain with the aid of up-to-date appliances.

A Matriarchal Saga.

I feel we are growing rather weary of the family saga with its largely fortuitous parallels of domestic and national history. To discover that the passing of *Grandmother Jones* coincided with that of the Reform Bill and that *Uncle Smith* obtained his *decree nisi* with the Relief of Ladysmith leaves me personally cold; and, though Miss STORM JAMESON, in *The Triumph of Time* (HEINEMANN, 8/6), seems to have found the chronological method congenial, I cannot help thinking it provides her with more scope than stimulus. The exceptional interest of certain episodes, practically complete in themselves, suggests that a less luxuriant and (if I may so horticulturally express myself) "spreading" method would have secured more fruitful results. The present

trilogy resumes three novels dealing with *Mary Hervey*, shipowner, whose span of English social history extends from the gross vigour of 1841 to the etiolated levity of 1923. The heroine, brutally reacting in maturity to a brutally-handled youth, sacrificing her family and "hands" to the business that rises and wanes with her, is drawn with skill, energy and commiseration. But the book's outstanding triumph is the history of her daughter, *Silvia*, whose disastrous marriage and pathetic attempt to re-establish herself exhibit far finer qualities of imagination and insight.

Grey and Green.

MESSRS. BATSFORD AND FRY have,
With fortune, combined
In a volume that I have
Found much to my mind;
Its sumptuous planners
Herein hit their marks—
Which are grey English manors,
Green gardens, broad parks.

From Romaunt's Middle Ages
Their work goes its way
By the stateliest stages
To VICTORIA's day;
Messrs. BATSFORD supply it,
So ask for the same—
Twelve-and-sixpence will buy it.
And here is its name:

Homes and Gardens of England,
Elm-circled, where, hark!
Wise rooks, o'er a Spring land,
Have built since The Ark.
It's a book with charm to it
Of the grey and the green,
And its pictures, strung through it,
Are pearls to be seen.

A Marshal of France.

The taint of infallibility hangs all about the two long volumes of *The Memoirs of Marshal Joffre* (BLES, 36/-). Without the smallest difficulty the mental processes of the famous French soldier succeeded in accomplishing a reconciliation between the maintenance of a vigorous and effective initiative and a wise abstinence from action pending a declaration of the enemy's intentions, and it was equally easy for him to excuse the faulty original disposition of the French armies on the outbreak of war and to belittle the part played by the British forces in checking the torrential German rush across the north-east frontiers that resulted. His qualified approval of our Army and commanders is indeed expressed in terms of hardly sufferable condescension such as one would be sorry to consider at all typical of the point of view of allies for whom we made, and continue to make, rather considerable sacrifices. Marshal JOFFRE was a great soldier who, while sustaining immense responsibilities, never failed to produce the rising spirit that should match the rising occasion and what he wrote must always have a special interest for historians of the period, but its general appeal is surprisingly limited. The highly personal intricacies of French domestic politics



"COO! WHERE DID YOU GET ALL THESE?"

"OH, AT ONE TIME THE OLD MAN WAS KEEN ON BIG-GAME HUNTING OR SOMETHING."

and military intrigue are not often thrilling to outsiders and it is only rarely that the real drama of war becomes apparent in these memoirs under the stress of moving events.

Mitigated Optimism.

To the question, *Can Europe Recover?* (LANE, 7/6) many of us would hesitate to offer an answer unqualified by "ifs" and "ans." But Mr. H. R. KNICKERBOCKER, having asked it, replies to it straightway in the monosyllabic affirmative; and, having uttered that comfortable word, proceeds at some length to justify what, he asserts, is not his optimism but his realism. A pilgrimage of inquiry, undertaken on behalf of a great American newspaper, took him to ten European cities and into the presence of many leading statesmen and economists, including MUSSOLINI, MASARYK and our own Sir JOSIAH STAMP. They must have found him an unusually intelligent interviewer; he is certainly a very acute observer, and the conclusion he has drawn from

his observations is that, though Europe, and indeed the world at large, has undeniably struck a bad patch, there is no irreparable disaster, either political or economic, ahead of us. There have been crises in the past, but there have always been recoveries; countries have gone bankrupt and have come up smiling; economic law makes inevitably, if not for righteousness, at any rate for the righting of the storm-tossed ship of state. It would be impossible here to examine Mr. KNICKERBOCKER's heartening arguments in detail, but they are most lucidly and on the whole convincingly set forth. Mr. KNICKERBOCKER has a light hand with figures and statistics, currencies and tariffs. He can invest the dismal science itself with a certain liveliness. He is, in short, a very accomplished journalist—and perhaps a little better than that.

Sense and Sentiment.

Miss JOANNA CANNAN writes so persuasively and draws her characters with such firm strokes that I am apt to find myself suspending all carping criticism when I read a book of hers, and simply enjoying it. *Snow in Harvest* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) has not such a striking theme as she used in *Ithuriel's Hour*, and I am a little doubtful whether dancers—even Russian dancers—can preserve their bloom undimmed for twenty hectic years. Also I feel sure, in spite of Dr. JOHNSON's philosophy, that no man who had seen his beloved murdered before his eyes could care quite so much as usual about his dinner next day, and that no woman who could press a divorce on an innocent and unwilling husband, as *Alicia* does, would settle down so calmly with him when her petition had been dismissed. But none of these things matters. With easy self-confident skill Miss CANNAN describes *Geoffrey Quarrier's* young love and his loveless sensible marriage and the things which happened when the girl he had worshipped came back, still exquisite and warm and kind, into his cold middle-aged world. And she does it so well that I read on from page to page with breathless interest and turned the last convinced that one of the most pathetic spectacles is that of a human being who realises that he has made himself a second-best life trying to live it in a first-class fashion.

A Civilising Journalist.

A most hopeful sign—a pessimist might say the only one—in popular journalism is Mr. H. V. MORTON. He contrives to interest readers at different levels of culture. One can easily believe that he is a potent civilising force. Thus some of his essays and sketches which have appeared in the daily Press are found worthy to be reprinted, together with some news-items, in a book entitled *Blue Days at Sea* (METHUEN, 3/6). In fact he is at sea, visiting the Navy,

during only half its course. The rest is occupied with slight impressions of people and places. Mr. MORTON provides uniformly good reading, for he is never afraid of giving himself away. Indeed this gift of himself is ultimately the chief thing he has to offer. Once you begin to know him you are bound to like him. He has been well supported by his publisher, who offers a charming little volume at a modest price.

Diplomatic Pressure.

Adherents of the little red-bearded sailor will find him as cocky as ever in *Captain Kettle, Ambassador* (WARD, LOCK, 7/6). Acting as representative of the Moorside Hill Syndicate, he set forth on a series of adventures that taxed his powers of resource to their limits. Mr. C. J. CUTLIFFE HYNE even allows him occasionally to be caught napping; but we who have always followed the sanguine *Captain*, as he fought his way through seas or jungles of trouble, know that he is never more dangerous than when the odds are

heavily against him. For example, in these stories of his exploits we find him marooned on an island, with a choice between starvation and swimming through shark-infested water to the mainland of Mexico. Readers of "Pink Pearls" will discover how he encountered this emergency and how unwelcome his arrival was to those who had placed him in a situation that seriously offended his dignity. This story I take to be the gem of the collection, but "The Oil War" and "Right o' Way" are also remarkable additions to the long list of *Kettle's* lurid experiences.

Round the Town.

The Public School Murder, though not quite successful as a thriller, was a delightfully amusing story of school-life. Mr. R. C. WOODTHORPE has now followed it with *London is a Fine Town* (IVOR NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 7/6), in which *Ernest Chevington*, a young bank-clerk, leaves Worcestershire to enjoy himself in London and incidentally to find the granddaughter of his butcher. In many ways such an expedition gives Mr. WOODTHORPE ample opportunity to reveal his ironical and humorous gifts. For instance, *Mrs. Perfect*, under whose capacious and capable wings *Ernest* took shelter in Bloomsbury, deserves an honoured place among the most distinguished landladies of fiction. But parts of this tale seem to me too consciously observed. *Ernest* watches cricket at Lord's, penetrates into the office of *The Morning Sunrise*, interviews a Cabinet Minister, goes into the "underworld" and so forth; but, although his adventures are by no means dull, they leave me with the feeling that I have been taken round the town by a professional guide. So the story, to my mind, is especially to be recommended to people who, like *Ernest*, are not too familiarly acquainted with London. They will be both enlightened and entertained.



INSTEAD OF THE USUAL CARVEN EULOGY, A GRAMOPHONE RECORD MADE BY THE LATE CELEBRITY DURING LIFE—AND WHO COULD DO IT BETTER?